

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 NASSAU 00059 132119Z

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

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R 131805Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY NASSAU

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7728

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT BF

SUBJ: CECIL WALLACE-WHITFIELD TO LEAD FNM

REF: NASSAU 2163

1. THE CENTRAL COUNCIL OF THE FNM MEETING AT PARTY HEAD-QUARTERS ON JAN. 12 ELECTED CECIL WALLACE-WHITFIELD AS THE PARTY'S NEW LEADER OVER HIS ONLY OPPONENT, SENATOR ORVILLE TURNQUIST, BY A VOTE OF 26 TO 18. WALLACE-WHITFIELD REPLACES KENDAL ISAACS WHO EARLIER THAT SAME EVENING EFFECTIVELY TENDERED HIS RESIGNATION BECAUSE OF ILL HEALTH.
2. CYRIL TYNES, MP FOR ACKLINS AND CROOKED ISLAND, HAS BEEN APPOINTED ACTING LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION IN PARLIAMENT PENDING ISAACS' RESIGNATION FROM THE HOUSE AND A BY-ELECTION IN ISAAC'S PRESENT CONSTITUENCY. WALLACE-WHITFIELD WILL CONTEST THAT ELECTION ON BEHALF OF THE FNM IN WHAT IS CONSIDERED A SAFE DISTRICT FOR THE OPPOSITION PARTY.
3. TURNQUIST HAS PUBLICLY PLEDGED HIS FULL SUPPORT OF THE NEW LEADER AND WILL RETAIN HIS SEAT IN THE SENATE AND HIS POSITION AS PARTY CHAIRMAN. HIS VOTING STRENGTH ON MONDAY NIGHT ALSO LED TO HIS BEING NAMED AS DEPUTY LEADER OF THE FNM AND IN THE EVENT THE PARTY WERE TO WIN THE UPCOMING GENERAL ELECTION,

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PAGE 02 NASSAU 00059 132119Z

HE WOULD ASSUME THE ROLE OF DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER.

4. WALLACE-WHITFIELD'S FORMAL ELECTION CULMINATES A CAMPAIGN COMMENCED LAST APRIL AT THE FNM CONFERENCE TO REASSUME PARTY LEADERSHIP. FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE HIS DEFEAT IN THE 1972 ELECTION AND SUBSEQUENT RESIGNATION FROM THE LEADERSHIP POST, THE PARTY HAS A LEADER WHO HAS CHARISMA AS WELL AS THE POLITICAL SAVVY TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE REAL AND GROWING NUMBER OF PROBLEMS FACING THE INCUMBENT PLP. THE POLITICAL CAULDRON IN THE BAHAMAS, LONG QUIESCENT, WILL UNDOUBTEDLY BEGIN TO BUBBLE, AND EVEN SOONER THAN MIGHT BE EXPECTED AS WALLACE-WHITFIELD IS EXPECTED TO HOLD A PRESS CONFERENCE LATER THIS WEEK TO ACQUAINT THE PRESS AND THE BAHAMIAN PEOPLE OF HIS PLANS AND PROGRAM. WHILE THE SPLIT WITHIN THE FNM BETWEEN THE WALLACE-WHITFIELD AND TURNQUIST FACTION WAS MORE EVENLY DIVIDED THAN HAD BEEN EXPECTED, IT IS LIKELY THAT TURNQUIST WILL USE HIS POWERS TO LINE UP HIS SUPPORTERS (INCLUDING THE OUTSPOKEN, ANTI-WALLACE-WHITFIELD, SENATOR ARTHUR FOULKES) BEHIND THE NEW LEADER AND THAT THIS TASK WILL BE MADE EASIER BECAUSE OF THE PARTY MEMBERS EVEN STRONGER DISTASTE FOR THE POLICIES AND PERSONALITIES OF THE INCUMBENT PINDLING GOVERNMENT.

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**TAGS:** PINT, BF, FNM, (WALLACE-WHITFIELD, CECIL V)  
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